

THE  
MILITANT CHRISTIAN;  
OR, THE  
GOOD SOLDIER  
OF  
JESUS CHRIST,  
Described in his Arms compleat;  
AS ALSO  
The Hardness of his Service

TOGETHER WITH  
The Words of Command; many precious Encouragements  
and Directions how to please CHRIST his Captain, and  
how to crown his Profession by being best in the worst of  
Times.

Carefully abridged from the Original of  
Mr. STEPHEN COVEN,  
Rector of *Sanford Peverel*, in *Devonshire*;

Repetitions only being expunged, without omitting any  
Thing material to the Subject, and the whole being care-  
fully revised and corrected.

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*Fight the good Fight of Faith, 1 Tim. vi. 12.*

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T H E  
A U T H O R ' s E P I S T L E

*To all the Militant Saints, and true Followers of CHRIST, the Captain of our great Salvation.*

B E L O V E D,

**Y**OU are the proper patrons of this poor piece. Now I make bold to send it forth into the wide world, it can expect shelter from none but you. Should it happen to fall into its enemies hands, the Papists, &c. they will give it no quarter, but will use it worse than an enemy.

This treatise, like many a soldier, rides out a scouting on a low horse, and with mean apparel, but with good armour, for it has the whole armour of God. Its errand is to save your souls from the fire of Hell, and that is better than to be preserved from the flames of Sodom.

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If you ask me why I send it forth into the field seeing so many valiant worthies there already? Why, I look upon it as my duty to do service for my captain, as well as another. The best preachers and printers are but stars of the first magnitude in the right hand of the sun of righteousness, and shine in a derived light from him; and why should not lesser stars in the lowest orb shine in their spheres to give light to this dark world when enlightened by the same sun?

Again, I know not how near my glass is run, and how soon the shadows of the evening may overtake me; therefore I am willing to double my diligence, and to do much in a short time for my great master, yea, to spread truth a great way, many ways, and to many men at once. This little piece may travel where the author knows not, yea, where the author cannot; it may have its liberty when he is in bonds; it may speak when his mouth is stopped; it may dwell in England when he is banished; it may remain as a trophy of truth, and a pillar to posterity, when he is dead, yea, and as another Abel, who being  
dead

dead yet speaketh, and as a statue of brass, holding forth its dead hand with a living voice, pointing to every traveller the right road, saying, "This is the good old way, walk ye in it."

Again, the great apostasy of many professors, yea, and great preachers too; the long tail of the beast full of apostate wandering stars, that are fallen from Heaven, and are swept away already, and the shaking of many more; the timorousness, the temporising, the cowardice, the fearfulness and falseness, the moroseness and bitterness, the mutiny and malice, &c. that is among the professors; the hearkening so much to carnal prudence, and so little to precious Christ; the danger his interest is in, and the little valiantness there is for the truth upon the earth; the doubts and fears that many labour under about the right manner of worshipping God, and the backwardness of many to lend their great torches to light the little candles. These motives, and the like, have wetted my pen with ink, and my eyes with tears, and extorted these lines from me.

Now

Now, fellow foldiers, having commended this treatise to you, I commend you to the Great Shepherd of the sheep, and the Captain of our Salvation, before whom we shall all appear at the general muster and rendezvous at the great pay-day, when saints militant, and saints triumphant, God, angels, and men, shall all meet at once. Let us so fight the good fight of faith, and be faithful in the warfare of the lamb, that we may see one another with comfort then; and to most of you I say, "Farewell, farewell, untill that day!"



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T H E  
E D I T O R ' s P R E F A C E  
T O T H I S E D I T I O N .

R E A D E R ,

**M**R. STEPHEN COVEN, author of *The Militant Christian*, was one of those worthy confessors ejected on the fatal 24th of August, 1662. We have but little said of him by those who have transmitted to us an account of the above conscientious men. We find he was deprived of the rectory of Sanford Peverel, in the county of Devon. From this book he appears to have been a warm-hearted advocate for true religion. The design of it was to animate the followers of the Lord Jesus to courage and perseverance in those suffering times ; and by the esteem expressed for it among serious persons  
of



of our day, we doubt not but it was useful to thousands when it first came from the press.

The book has been for a number of years very scarce. Many who have read it with pleasure and profit have wished to see it re-printed. To gratify their wishes, and with a view to the spiritual profit of Christians in general, it is now abridged and re-printed.

There were in the first edition many things suited to the times in which the author lived. These, as now quite useless, are left out, some words are likewise altered for such as are better understood; but the sense and design of the book are carefully preserved, some verses of poetry are inserted for the better remembering the substance of what is written and the solid pleasure of the reader.

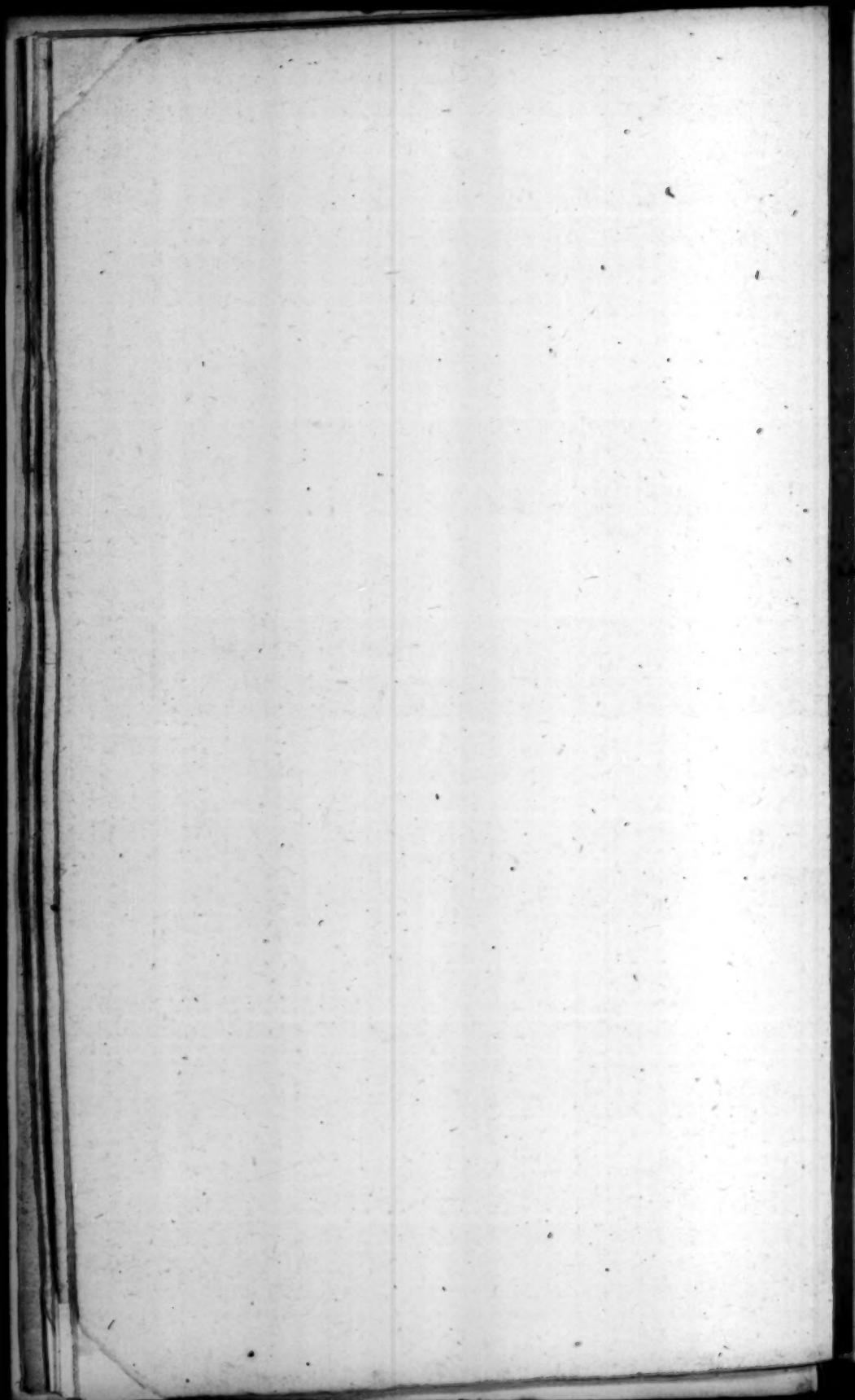
The Christian soldier is here represented in his present warfaring condition. You will find he has a good captain, a good cause, a good armour provided, and many profitable directions given for rightly using his  
spiritual

spiritual weapons. God grant every spiritual warrior may be obedient to the first, courageous in the second, and taught by the Holy Ghost successfully to use the last. *Amen.*



6 JY 59







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THE  
MILITANT CHRISTIAN;

OR, THE  
GOOD SOLDIER  
OF  
JESUS CHRIST.

2 TIMOTHY, ii. 3.

*THOU therefore endure Hardness, as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ.*

**T**HIS epistle was wrote by Paul to Timothy while a prisoner at Rome, when the time of his departure and martyrdom was at hand. Here observe by the way, from the circumstance of the epistle, that it is no new thing for the ministers of Christ to be the prisoners of Christ. Paul was often put in prison, as it appears from some of his writings, 2 Cor. vi. 5. Paul was a pluralist in reference to his stripes and imprisonments; but not as to his livings. The wise man's observation is made good in this respect, Eccles. i. 9. "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which

is done, is that which shall be done ; and there is no new thing under the sun."

Jeremiah was put into a dungeon ; many of the prophets were prisoners long before the apostle's time ; so when their time came, it was revealed to John, that the Devil and his agents would cast some of them into prison, &c. Observe here again, that neither present bonds, nor the near approaches of death, should discourage Christ's ministers and servants from the promoting of Christ's interest in the world.

When Paul was a prisoner at Rome, and likely to be beheaded by Nero, then he directed and encouraged young Timothy to proceed vigorously forward with the interests of Christ. Gospel ministers should be like Samson, who, when his strength was betrayed, and in a great measure taken from him ; when fallen into his enemies hand, and nearest his death ; then he pulled down the pillars of the house, and performed the greatest exploits. So the servants of Christ, when most restrained, and nearest their end, should strive with the greatest fortitude and resolution to pull down and demolish Satan's kingdom, and perform the greatest exploits for the interest of him who called them to so honourable an employment as to be workers together with God.

None struggle so hard for life as the dying man : so dying preachers should, above all others, & above all times, when the time of their departure is at hand, have the greatest courage, and the most undaunted resolutions, in and for the cause of Christ.—The Lord Jesus commended  
the

the church of Thyatira, because her last work was better than her first.

Here observe again, that which the wicked design in persecuting and imprisoning the ambassadors of God, is not attained by them.

The wicked would be glad to see all gospel light, and liberty, wholly demolished; to see godliness, and those who profess it, eradicated, and driven to obscurity and oblivion; but the blessed God has, and does, always wonderfully frustrate their most malicious designs.

When Paul was put in prison, both his pen and bonds preached Christ, spread the gospel, comforted and confirmed the brethren. The words of ministers, particularly when prisoners for the cause of Christ, are so memorable and affecting as the words of a dying man.

That great persecution which we read of at the death of Stephen the deacon, we there are informed how it tended to spread the truth far and near. When the servants of God were scattered one from the other, "Then they that were scattered, went every where preaching the word."

Upon the occasion of burning Mr. Patrick Hamilton, John Lindsay said to Bishop Beaton, "My Lord, if you burn any more, you will hurt the cause. If you burn them, let them be burnt in hollow cellars; for the smoke of Mr. Hamilton hath infected so many as it blew upon."

The gospel gains ground by being persecuted. When John was banished into the isle of Patmos, then the Lord revealed unto him those

great mysteries contained in the Revelation. Ah, Sirs ! God outshoots the wicked in their bow, and makes the bonds and banishments of his persecuted servants to spread his grand and powerful word. This hath been long ago received as a fact, and now is grown into a proverb, " The blood of martyrs is the seed of the church."

But now to the text. In the whole epistle are these four things to be observed, The introduction, the inscription, the subject matter, and the conclusion.

The text is contained in the subject matter. The apostle, having exhorted Timothy to be faithful in the discharge of his ministry towards those who were without as well as within the church ; Paul knew that this would expose Timothy to hardship and persecution, therefore (in the words of the text) he says to his son Timothy, " Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

The text contains three things for our meditation ; duty, motive, and manner.

I. A duty, viz. to endure hardness.

II. The motive to perform it, which is observed from Timothy's relation to Christ, viz. his soldier.

III. The manner of performing this, by enduring the hardness of it, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

The words contain something supposed and expressed. That which is supposed in them is, That Timothy is a soldier of Christ, and a faithful discharge of his duty in this as a soldier, would expose him to many hardships and persecutions.



persecutions. That which is expressed in them is, That Timothy must endure the hardness which is incident to this employment, viz. of being a soldier.

The word soldier in the Scripture is taken either properly or metaphorically : Properly, when understood of a person employed in military affairs and bearing arms, being under military command and pay, Matt. viii. 9. Metaphorically, when understood of a Christian engaged to fight the Lord's battles, and to follow him as his captain-general in the militant church on earth.

The phrase to endure hardness, signifies not only that, but patiently to bear all kinds of difficulties, with a Christ-like spirit to the end of the warfare ; this is to be done by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Two doctrinal conclusions lie very plain in these words, viz. that every true believer is a soldier of Jesus Christ, and that it is the duty of such to endure hardness as good soldiers during the term of the present life.

In prosecuting these two points, I shall speak to them by way of proof and demonstration, by way of use and application.

I will endeavour to clear the truth of the first point in the following manner :—

I. Every believer is chosen and called by Christ unto his service, whether publick or private, John, xv. 19. Not apostles only are chosen and called, but all believers likewise, Rom. i. 5, 6, 7.

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II. When



II. When Christ conquers and inclines the will of poor sinners, they come away as volunteers unto him; his grace operates upon every faculty of the soul, and gives them help and strength, that they may obey all the commands of the blessed Jesus. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

III. Every true believer hath arms and weapons appointed him by his king, Ephes. vi. 11. to the 17th. There is the whole and holy armour of God, a compleat cap-a-pee from head to foot. Here is the breast-plate of righteousness to secure the heart, the girdle of truth to fasten the breast-plate. Here is an armour for the feet too, that the believer may stand without any fear of falling—"Having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Here is the helmet of salvation for the head, the sword of the spirit for the hand, the shield of faith to carry before to face the front. Oh! what a compleat armour this is! God be praised for it. It is both defensive and offensive. May the blessed God give both wisdom and strength unto his people to use it for his glory and their own comfort!

IV. The believer has his warfare appointed him, his enemies discovered unto him by little and little, he receives his commission also from his captain to march against them; the Lord Jesus commissions every believer to enter the combat with all kind of enemies whatever, whether foreign or domestic, external or internal, open or secret.

There

There are foreign and external enemies, which may be considered thus:—The prince of the world, the men, the lusts, and the things of the world.

I. The prince of the world, the old serpent, the captain-general of the hellish militia, who constantly make war against Christ and the church militant on earth. Satan bids defiance and proclaims war against Christ and his followers; therefore every Christian is commissioned to the utmost of his power to use the whole armour of God, that he with boldness may resist the Devil and all his concomitants.

II. The men of the world, who by nature are the Devil's auxiliaries. Tho' these oppose the truth of the gospel, yet Christ's soldiers are bound in duty to vindicate it, to hold it fast; for said Jude, "Ye should earnestly contend for the faith, which was once delivered unto the saints."

III. The lusts of the world. God's people have their lusts, warring in their members, James, iv. 1. therefore the believer is to fight against all sins, both in himself and others; yea, the very appearance of it. The shape or image of sin is to be dreaded as a very dangerous enemy. May God help every believer to oppose and hate sin from a principle of love to the captain of our eternal salvation.

IV. The things of the world, both adverse and prosperous. One is against the believer by threats, menaces, and dismal frowns; the other by treacherous smiles and fawning insinuations. The former of these Paul mentions

at large, Rom. viii. 35, 36. The latter are considered by him too very clear, 1 Tim. vi. 9. The Devil tried Christ with these things when he shewed unto him the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

Satan and corruption work by these still to insnare the followers of Christ. Many sinners are totally destroyed by worldly prosperity, Prov. i. 32. If adversity (with Saul) slayeth its thousands, prosperity (with David) its ten thousands, this destroyeth the wicked wholly, pierceth, woundeth and endangereth many of God's people in the world.

V. Every believer is under the absolute and indispensable command of Christ. When he commissioned his disciples to preach and baptise, they were to teach that all his commandments should be observed, Matt. xxviii. 19. 20. Some have defined a soldier thus:—That he is one who is not at his own disposal, but is at the disposal and command of another. So is the believer, 1 Cor. vi. 20. Christ, the captain of our great salvation, has more than a creation right in believers; they are his by purchase; he hath redeemed them from the miserable bondage and slavery of sin and Satan; that these might be his to serve him for ever, Luke, i. 74. Much more might be said for the confirmation of the doctrine, viz. that every believer is a soldier of Christ.

Now comes the application of it; and here shall speak but to one use only, viz. that the soldiers of Christ should observe his command, and

and to quit themselves as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

1. Our captain commands us to make ready and provide for all occasions, Matt. xxiv. 44. Luke, xii. 40. It is the duty of soldiers to get ready and make sure preparations for the greatest dangers, the most potent assaults, and furious onset of an enemy. Soldiers should be sure of their arms, ammunition, and provision, and see that their fortifications are strong, their magazines well stored with all kinds of necessaries. Thus the soldiers of Christ should do. 1 Tim. vi. 19. It is good to be ready. At present your souls may be in peace, your conscience very calm, but you know not how soon a storm of temptations and troubles may come upon you, as it came upon David. He thought that his mountain stood firm, as if it could not be moved; but God hid his face, and then he was troubled, Psalm xxx. 6, 7. Ah! soldiers of Christ, be ye ready. The destroying angel may soon make an onset, and knock at your doors to see who you are, and to see whether you have the lamb's blood with you or not. The king of terrors too will scale your walls soon, and stare you in the face. He will cause you to see his bending bow and feel his piercing arrows, from which no man can escape. But when the soldiers of Christ are ready, and strong in his grace, then they can bear whatever enemy he may permit to advance against them.

The industrious ant in the summer provides for the winter, though guided only by natural instinct.



instinct. The mariners bring provisions to their ships before they go to sea. The soldier in time of peace prepares for war. It should be thus with all the soldiers of Christ. O be persuaded to lay up provision against a trying day ! Days of persecution, poverty and sickness may come upon you while in the field of battle ; therefore the following provision should be made against them :—You should lay up a stock of precious promises, of experience, and of suffering graces. The promises are to the believer, as corks are to the net, as an anchor to a ship, and as a place of defence to a warrior. “ Experience (says the apostle) works hope ;” but grace, helping us to bear, suffer, and to strengthen us to hold on to the end, should be above all laid up by us in the heart.

That which may do in a calm will not do in a storm. A candle may do in the house, but a torch will hardly do in the wind. If you have but strength enough to hold out with the footmen, how will you keep company with the horsemen ? I would have you to observe Paul’s prayer for the Colossians, touching this grace, viz. to support you in trying times, Colos. i. 9, 10, 11. Suffering times will not only try the truth of grace, but the strength of it too ; therefore pray for suffering Joseph’s blessing, Gen. xlix. 24.

II. Forbear mutinying, viz. speak not against your general, nor let any discord be between you in your own camp. Military laws will not suffer mutineers to go unpunished, nor will the law of Christ. The blessed Jesus commands  
peace



peace and union to subsist between his soldiers while here upon earth ; if any of them act otherwise, they shall be punished for breaking his command ; wherefore you should tremble who endeavour to breed quarrels and to sow discord between the churches and one another while in the world. 'The captain's law is comprized against mutinying in this narrow compass, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself," Matt. xxii. 27, 28, 29. It is the desire of Christ that all his soldiers should be at peace and in union one with the other ; for he has commanded, commended, and prayed for this, John, xiii. 31. Psalm cxxxiii. 1. John, xvii. 21, 22, 23.

Jesus makes mention of the word *one* very often in these fore-mentioned verses. "That they all may be one as we are one, and be made perfect in one." And as all believers are united to Christ, it is his desire that they should be united to one another in like manner. The Lord Jesus bore this on his heart before the Father in prayer, that his people might be one. This was the very last desire of his heart before his death, "That you might be one." O let the dying prayer of the Redeemer be remembered ! God grant an increase of love and union to subsist between all his people and one another while in the world. The Devils are united together with the wicked of the earth to oppose you, and will you mutiny and make divisions among yourselves ? As long as Christ is not divided, why should you divide yourselves ?

selves? O forbear! forbear! lest ye be consumed one of another, Gal. v. 15.

Naturalists say, that those beasts which are most cruel to others are most loving to their own; and will you be furious and unkind to those who bear your own image and the image of Christ too? It is reported of John the Divine, that when he was very old, he (leaning on his staff) would say, "Little children, love one another." Alexander Severus seeing a company of Christians fighting, said, "Leave off the name of Christians, for this is not his spirit." Christians leave off mutiny and contentions, and desire the Lord to keep you in the unity of the spirit and in the bond of peace.

III. "Put on and make use of your spiritual arms," Ephes. vi. 11, 12, 13. A soldier is but little the better for having arms delivered to him if he does not make use of them: So it is with a soldier of Christ.

Here I would have you to observe three things:—

I. When you put on your armour, take heed that it is the armour of God. Common gifts and common grace will not do. Hypocrites may put on these, and make a great show under them too; but the believer should put on those graces which accompany salvation; therefore, O soldiers of Christ, take heed to take unto you the right shield, breast-plate, helmet, and sword. See that your work is wrought of God. When you are called to the field of battle, nothing will be of use to you then but that which

is of God ; therefore be sure that your armour is the whole armour of God.

II. Put on and use every part of your armour ; let every grace be exercised in its proper place, and add one grace unto another, untill all the graces of the blessed spirit are put in exercise, according to the apostle's direction—"Add to your faith, virtue ; and to virtue, knowledge ; and to knowledge, temperance ; and to temperance, patience ; and to patience, godliness ; and to godliness, brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness, charity."—Satan is a skilful warrior, and will endeavour to harm you, where he sees most to his purpose ; therefore put on all the truths of God, and obey all the commands of Christ, then you will quit yourselves like men, and appear in the field like soldiers armed of God, from whom Devils will flee, and by whom the works of darkness shall be conquered.

III. Let every part of your armour be used in its proper place. Every thing in its season is beautiful ; the beauty and safety of the soldiers of Christ appear very much when they make use of every piece of their armour in its proper place and season. The believer has need to exercise one grace, at one time, another at another, and sometimes many graces at once. Sometimes faith is called for ; above all put on the shield of faith. Sometimes both faith and patience are called for ; hence is the patience and faith of the saints. Sometimes love and sometimes sorrow are called for, as appears from the following Scrip-

tures, Rom. xii. 13, 14, 15. James, v. 13. When the prince of this world came to the field to give battle to the captain of our salvation, how wonderful he answered every temptation with his *scriptum est*. He put on every truth in its proper place, and made use of it in its proper season, and thereby overcame the Devil. "O my soul! learn of him; go thou and do likewise."

IV. Set your watch and keep it strict. No man can be a good soldier without watching; neither can any be good Christians without spiritual watching. It is one of Christ's commands that we should watch. Mark, xiii. 33, 34, 35, 36, 37. Watching is required to every duty and in every duty too. The matter of duty should be observed, and the manner how it is to be performed.

There are many things which believers should watch, and may be reduced into the following order:—

I. The eye. How did sin enter in at the eye of our first parents, while gazing on the beauty of the forbidden fruit! David fell most grievously for not watching the eye. The beauty of Bathsheba opened a passage through the eye to the very heart of David, into which adultery insinuated itself first, then murder marched after it. We read in the Scripture of an evil eye and of eyes full of adultery.

II. The tongue. David kept a watch upon this; and, lest his own should not be strict enough, he desired the Lord to watch it for him. We should be watchful how, and of what



we lay ; for when the judgment day comes, an account is to be given of every word ; therefore our words should be few, administering grace unto our hearers. “ The tongue (said an inspired apostle) is a fiery member, and a world of iniquity ;” and if so, how careful we should be to watch it.

III. The ear. As the tongue is to be watched that it be slow in speaking, the ear should be watched that it be swift in hearing. It should be shut against all errors, and opened wide to hear all the truths. “ He that hath an ear to ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches.”

Blest are the souls that hear and know

The gospel's joyful sound ;

Peace shall attend the path they go,

And light their steps surround.

IV. The head. If Satan gets the head, he will make a working shop of it, to invent all kinds of wicked inventions ; therefore it should be watched, lest any kind of errors should creep into the understanding.

V. The heart. If the heart should be taken, all is taken at once. Keep thy heart with all diligence, &c.

Keep my poor heart just as it is,

Set up therein thy throne ;

So shall I love thee above all,

And live to thee alone.

The believer has many enemies up in arms against him, and some of them within his very heart too. Here sin and grace struggle like the twins in Rebecca's womb. Our Lord



mentions a large file of enemies proceeding from the heart, Matt. xv. 19. And if a strict watch is not kept upon this, the believer will find nothing in his camp, but disorder and confusion. Those things which enter the heart, and proceed from it, should be examined what they are, and whose they are, whether of Christ, Satan, or of the world.

The Scriptures give us two reasons why Christ's soldiers should be on the watch.—

I. Because he himself will come the round to see and to examine all the centinels, to take notice how and what watch they keep, Mark, xiii. 35, 36, 37. It is a great crime in military discipline for a soldier to sleep on his watch. I have read of a commander who stabbed a soldier to death for sleeping on his watch, saying, "I found him dead in sleep, and left him asleep in death." God grant us strength both to watch and pray.—II. Because the devil is always on his watch, and ready to take every advantage to harm the soldiers and followers of the blessed Jesus, 1 Pet. v. 8.—This leads me to the fifth word of command, viz.

V. Take heed to observe what your commander says to you. Deaf soldiers are not fit for the field of action; deaf professors, *i. e.* those who are not willing to obey the commands of Christ, are not worthy the name of Christians.

Faith must obey her father's will,

As well as trust his grace;

A pardoning God is jealous still

For his own holiness.

VI. Keep

VI. Keep your ranks and files ; the places & stations in which your great commander has placed you. Military laws appoint every officer to his office, and every private soldier to his proper rank and file. The Lord Jesus requires the same order to be observed in the militant church, 1 Cor. vii. 24. The private soldier is not to command without a commission, nor the officer to give up his untill he is permitted : thus order is kept in the army. The Lord keeps the inanimate and irrational creatures in such an harmonious order, that it is beautiful to behold it. The sun, moon, and stars are kept in their own spheres, without a breach of order at all ; the earth is where God placed it, and the seas have their bounds, over which they cannot go ; and can it be imagined that the church should be full of confusions ? - God forbid ! He is not the author of confusion, but order. God grant unto all believers to be steady in their proper places !

VII. Keep with your colours. It is punishable by the martial law for a soldier to stay behind, or straggle from his colours ; but death, without mercy, if departed wholly from them. So it is by the royal law of Christ. He will whip most severely those soldiers who lie behind, and wander from their colours, although he will not put to death such as are true soldiers ; yet he will give to them broken bones and severe chastisements for leaving their first love. Christ's colours are most beautifully hung forth in his holy word. Whoever deviates from the truth, as it is in the word of God,

deviates from the right colours. The church of God prayed very ardent both for direction and preservation in this point, Can. i. 7. Certain it is, that Satan and impostors have their colours hung forth in the world; but believers should be aware of them, Phil. iii. 2. It is reported of Fabius Maximus, that he causes the hands of those soldiers to be cut off, who had departed from the Roman standard, as a terror to all the rest. So the blessed Jesus will cut off from his royal army all those who are not his soldiers indeed.

VIII. Follow your leader. This command is often mentioned in the gospel, Come after me, and follow me, &c. No man can be a true soldier to King Jesus, except he follows him, and that daily too, Luke, ix. 23. The soldiers of Christ are to follow him when hypocrites and apostates leave him, John, vi. 66. Some have followed him through all kind of dangers, prison, and death. "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there also shall my servant be. If any man serve me, him will my father honour," John, xii. 26. O what an encouragement is in this promise to follow Christ! May God, the eternal spirit, apply it to every one that follows the blessed Jesus!

Wide as the world is thy command,

Vast as eternity thy love;

Firm as a rock thy truth may stand,

When rolling years shall cease to move.

IX. Give battle to your enemies. All the words of command till now, were only words to make

make you ready for an engagement. At the battle of Nieupoort, the prince of Orange, having the Spanish army before him, & the sea behind him, spoke thus to his soldiers :—" If you will live, you must either eat up these Spaniards, or drink up this sea." Now the believer, while on earth, and in the body, has sin and Satan to surround him ; and if he would live, both these must be conquered ; therefore fight the good fight of faith, lay hold of eternal life, whereunto you are also called.

How oft have sin and Satan strove

To rend my soul from thee, O God ?

O soldiers of Christ, strive against sin ; the right hand and the right eye sins must be parted with ; the whole body of sin and death must be destroyed ; therefore make no peace, give no quarters to any of your enemies ; but fight on, and all you can lay hold upon put them to the spiritual sword immediately.

X. Stand fast. It is dangerous for soldiers to give ground in a battle : seldom they make good their retreat to their own advantage. Routing and confusion commonly are the issues of retreating ; therefore stand fast, and keep your ground.—There are three words in military discipline which Christ never used, nor never will, viz. Face about, counter-march, retreat. There is no face about in the whole Bible. The motto of Christ's soldiers should be like the city of Venice's, " Neither winds nor waves can move her" Christ will not admit to any of his soldiers so much as to look back, Luke, ix. 62. One of his commands



is, " Watch ye ; stand fast in the faith ; quit you like men ; be strong."

Here are two things to be observed, both in reference to God and man.—In reference to God. I. Pray the Lord to help you to keep your ground in love, wisdom, and zeal, to the worship and service of God. When professors grow dull in their affections towards the things of God, either in part or in whole, it is not a good sign. Apostacy begins in the affections. May God help us to hold fast our first love.—II. Keep your ground in gospel purity. Do not admit the mixtures which human invention has contrived, (and would join them with the pure worship of God) such as images, crucifixes, altar-pieces, invocation of saints, &c. &c. From such Popish trumpery withdraw. The Lord said, that the true worshippers should worship in spirit and in truth. Have nothing to do with the mystical whore, nor with any of her relics ; but keep your ground in gospel purity according to the direction of the unerring word of God.—III. Keep your ground in gospel liberty too. Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Put on no yoke but Christ's ; he alone is the head of the church ; therefore believers are not bound to worship God at Jerusalem, nor Damascus, and no where else ; but are at liberty to worship God any where as to place, if under the direction, assistance, and influence of God, the eternal spirit.

The glorious gospel is in brief  
 A sovereign word of sweet relief,  
 Not clogg'd with cumbersome commands  
 To bind the soul's receiving hands.

II. In reference to man. There are second-table duties to be observed, as well as the first. No man can walk holily towards God, except he walks righteously towards his fellow creatures also. An unrighteous conversation will greatly dishonour a holy profession, and will cause the wicked to speak with disdain of the holy things of God. True Christianity consists in uniformity and conformity to the commands and unto the image of the blessed Jesus, through the whole of the believer's life from first to last. It would be lamentable to hear any speaking, "Here is a professor of Christianity, and yet proud, covetous, merciless, making no conscience of his word; a saint at church, but a devil in the market, in the shop, and in his family." Severe reflections! O believers! O soldiers of Christ! you see the need there is of daily support of grace from the Lord, to help you to be upright in your conduct, both towards God and man.

XI. As you were. This military phrase is used to regulate a disordered regiment, being driven from their proper place by the power of the enemy. The soldiers, *i. e.* some of them are too often over-powered, though not killed by the enemy. The Devil's snares are very strong, and many temptations very powerful, the propensity and the inclination of depraved nature ready to blaze with every spark. Now  
 David

David commits adultery with Bathshebah ; anon Peter swears in the enemy's camp, " I know not the man." So it is now ; many of those who were a little while ago very zealous and bold in the service of Christ, and one would have thought nothing would or could have stopped them from going after Christ ; but where are they this day ? " O tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon." What declensions ! what backslidings ! what reluctances and coldness are seen in too many of the professors of the present age ! May the great captain come, and cause all his disordered regiments to be as they were, in love, zeal, union, watchfulness, and courage !

XII. Bringers up of the rear, double the front. When the front of an army is much assaulted, then this word of command is used. So it is very often with the militant church ; the interest of Christ sometimes is warmly set upon in the front, as it was in queen Mary's time, and others too ; the colours in danger, the ark beset, the Philistines in hopes to win the day. When it is thus with the church, then the rear soldiers, valiant, learned, wise, and zealous gospel ministers, should come up to the front, to help the Lord against the mighty, come up to the spiritual conflict, and act like men of war. Valiant Leonides being told that his enemies arrows were so thick in flight that they shadowed the sun beams, " No matter, (said he) we shall see better to fight in the shade." O believers, be courageous to fight the Lord's battles, though in the valley of the shadow

shadow of death ! and say while fighting, as one of our late generals said, " The morning shall lead us forth either to victory or death."

Stand up my soul, shake off thy fears,  
And gird the gospel armour on ;  
March to the gates of endless joy,  
Where thy great captain Saviour's gone.

This leads me to the second doctrine from the text, viz. that it is the duty of those who profess Christianity to endure hardness, as good soldiers are wont to do. In prosecuting this doctrine, four things are to be observed.

I. Whence this hardness proceeds from.

II. Why it must be endured.

III. How it should be endured.

IV. An application of the whole doctrine.

I. Whence it proceeds from.

I. A part of it proceeds from God himself.

Job declares that the arrows of the Almighty entered his soul. David complains of broken bones.

II. A part of it proceeds from the Devil.

It is a hard and dangerous work to fight a roaring lion ; how much more so to fight a raging and a malicious Devil ? The apostle tells us of the fiery darts of the Devil : these darts are sharp to pierce, and fiery to burn. The magazine of hell is full of these instruments of cruelty. There are a great variety of them too ; some for all sorts, sizes, ranks, and degrees of men. The soldiers of Christ must labour hard to endure all these.

III. A part of this hardness proceeds from men also. The hardness of their tongues must be



be endured. This cutting, poisonous, and fiery weapon must be borne with while here below. Heb. xi. 36. "As the tongues of wicked men are sharp and fiery; so their hands also are like lead, and their feet like iron." How much the Scriptures tell us what hardness the saints have endured from men, both under the Old and New Testaments!

IV. A part of this hardness proceeds from the believer himself; and that in a three fold respect.

I. The hardness of self-denial. This hardness Abraham endured, particularly when offering up his son Isaac. A coward would have been apt to reason it thus:—"Lord, take my oxen, sheep, servants, any thing but my son. Spare this, spare this; for he is the darling of my soul, and the only hope of my life." But Abraham made no such pleas: the command being given, he rose early in the morning, and went readily to perform this hard self-denying service.—Nothing in the esteem of nature is dearer than life; yet this must be denied, and parted with sometimes in and for the cause of Christ. It was a bold expression of George Carpenter, a martyr, of Bavaria—"My wife and children are so dear unto me, that all the riches of the Dukedom should not be able to purchase them from me; but for the sake of my Lord God, I willingly leave them and all."

II. The hardness of mortification in crucifying internal corruptions. The carnal Jews would slay multitudes of sheep and oxen, until the Lord was weary of them, Isaiah, i. 11.

But

But then they would not slay one sin. The hypocrite will endure and perform outside easy service; but as for inward sin-crucifying duties, he will not have any thing to do with them. To cut or remove the stone from the bladder is a very severe performance; but to have it cut or removed from the heart is so severe an operation that none can endure it but the true believer.

III. The hardness of their particular places and stations in which Christ is pleased to place his soldiers. Some soldiers are called to harder service and duty than others; the frontiers and file leaders may meet with greater severity than the rear; the watchmen, who lie perdue, may meet with harder duty than those who keep the guard; the sentinel must not quit his watch, saying, "It is too cold to stand out;" the file leaders must not face about and fall back in the rear because it is hard in the front; the officers must not bid the private soldiers to go forward and themselves in the interim to run away; the standard bearer must not run away because the colours are most shot at, but he must keep his place till either death or victory decide the day. Thus it is with Christ's soldiers in the militant church; Paul was no sooner listed under his banner, but was put to hard service presently, Acts, ix. 15, 16. Notwithstanding all this, he performed his duty, and, as a good soldier, endured hardness, and at last laid down his life in and for the service of Christ.

In hope of that immortal crown,  
I now the cross sustain,

C

And

And gladly wander up and down,  
And smile at toil and pain.

This leads me secondly to show why this hardness must be endured.

I. It is to be endured because Christ has commanded that it should. His command is not to be questioned. It was Paul's question, "What wilt thou have me to do?" The will of God being revealed unto him, he conferred not with flesh and blood, Gal. i. 16.

II. It is to be endured, because it distinguishes in some measure the true Christian from the hypocrite. He will wash the hand, the cup, and the platter; but he will not endure the washing of the heart. He will follow after Christ in the sun-shine; but will hang the wing and shrink back when adversity and persecution come to be endured. The real Christian is described to be one that follows the lamb whithersoever he goeth, Rev. xiv. 4.

III. It is to be endured, because it makes the believer in some respects conformable unto Christ. God predestinated his people to be conformable unto the image of his son.

IV. It is to be endured, because otherwise it would be a disparagement to Christ. That you may understand this point more to your advantage, take notice of the account which the Centurion gave to Christ of his soldiers—"I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say unto one, *go*, and he goeth; and to another, *come*, and he cometh; and to my servant, *do this*, and he doeth it." Now suppose the Centurion should ask Christ an account

count of the character of his soldiers thus :—

“ Thou art more than a man ; thou art a God over all the forces and armies of both worlds. Now let me know how they obey thee, and what hardness they endure in thy service.” O how grievous is it to consider what the blessed Jesus must say to this ? Suppose it thus :—“ I have many soldiers under me : I command all the angels in heaven ; they obey me readily, and go forth willingly, to execute my decrees : but those of the militant church, I cannot give so good an account of them as thou hast of thine ; here are twelve of them selected out of the world, and are made my life-guard ; but one of them is a Devil, and all the rest are very weak, ready to yield to every trouble. I have ministers who should preach the word in season and out of season ; and have told them, if they hold their peace, that the stones immediately should speak : and yet many of these say, “ Now is an evil time, and the prudent must keep silence.”

Again, suppose if one was to desire Satan to give an account of his. O how sad is it to think that the father of lies can speak too much truth (to the dishonour of Christ) in this matter, thus :—“ I have many apostates who have left the service of Christ. I can show many who have sickly bodies, naked backs ; yea, many who have ruined both themselves and families, yet willingly endure any hardship under my command. My soldiers are willing to endure the whip, the goal, the gallows, death, and damnation itself ! Here are their sons



which stigmatized, the ropes which hanged many of them ; and though many drop daily, I have enough to fill their places when called for. I can show a larger book of malefactors, who suffered in and for my cause, than any book of martyrs who have suffered in and for Christ's." O believers, beg the Lord to make you faithful, even unto death.

III. How this hardness is to be endured.

I. Voluntarily. The apostle Paul endured this hardness willingly. " I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus," Acts, xxi. 13.

II. Patiently. It was said of the Lacedæmonians, that they were patient in travel, weather, and war. So should all the soldiers of Christ be. Laurence the martyr, when on the gridiron said, " Look ! one side is roasted enough ; turn the other."

III. Courageously. The Roman soldiers under Julius Cæsar did but smile at the greatest dangers and death. It is said of Christ, that he endured the cross, despising the shame ; so should all his soldiers do likewise.—Modestus threatening Basil with confiscation of goods, &c. Basil said, " If thou hast any thing else, threaten it ; for I have nothing to lose, but a few old clothes and books. As for banishment, the whole earth is mine ; and as for death, that will be a benefit to me ; for it will hasten me to God, to whom I live, and after death shall be with him for ever." This soldier was courageous ; so was Nehemiah. " Shall such a man

as I am flee?" May God give us all to be more courageous!

Not all that tyrants think or say,  
 (With rage and lightning in their eyes)  
 Nor hell shall fright my heart away,  
 Should hell with all its legions rise.

V. Constantly. The whole life of a believer is a continual warfare. When it pleased God to bring any to be under the banner of his son, they are never to give up till life ends. None are too young nor too old to fight the Lord's battle. "Be faithful unto death" is one of our captain's great commands. The race is never at an end nor the battle over till the breath goes out of the body; then farewell! eternal farewell to all things below!

My numerous foes now beat me down;  
 But then I'll wear the victor's crown.  
 My Lord will break the dimming glass,  
 And show his glory face to face.

V. Sincerely. It is of great moment to have principles, aims, and ends sincere in all that we do or suffer. None shall pass for good soldiers at the judgment day, but such as have been sincere; for sincerity is the greatest jewel in the crown of martyrdom; therefore, let those who suffer, see that every thing is done according to the will of God.

Bless'd are the sufferers who partake  
 Of pain and shame for Jesus' sake;  
 Their souls shall triumph in the Lord;  
 Glory and joy are their reward.

This leads to the fourth thing proposed, viz. the application. This shall be handled or ap-

plied by way of encouraging and directing the soldiers or followers of the blessed Jesus.— Here, O believers, consider what a captain the captain of your great salvation is !

I. He is of a most honourable extraction ; the first born of the eternal Father, one that is made higher than the kings of the earth. He is “ king of kings, and lord of lords.”

II. For your encouragement consider the strength and valour of your captain ; his arm is omnipotent, he is stronger than Samson, more valiant than Gideon, David, or Alexander, &c. This is he who cuts in pieces the gates of brass, and breaks asunder the bars of iron, bears away the gates of hell, divides the sea, wounds the dragon, overthrows the chariots, and cuts down and cuts off the spirits of princes, and is terrible, yea very terrible, to the kings of the earth. The captain of salvation is the terror both of men and devils ; he is a captain that will make all other captains quake and shake before him. When the lion-like captain of the tribe of Judah appears, all must quit the field, Rev. vi. 15, 16, 17.

My Lord, my Conqueror, and King,

Thy scepter and thy sword I sing.

Thine is the victory, and I fit

A joyful soldier at thy feet.

III. For your encouragement consider the skill and policy of your captain. It is said of Hannibal, that he never fought a battle without laying some secret plots. So it may be said of the Devil ; he is full of wiles and political stratagems : but what for that ? Let men and devils

vils be never so skilful in their projects against the believer, Christ, his great and skilful captain, knows how to outwit and overturn all their hellish schemes ; he knows where all their mines are digged, where all their forces and flankers lie : he makes counter-mines, and blows them up, or else buries them in the pit which they did dig. O believers ! your captain is both almighty and all-wise ! he taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and snareth them in the works of their own hands.

IV. For your encouragement, consider the meekness and mildness of your captain in his deportment towards you ; he is not harsh and rigid, as many commanders are. The chariot in which he rides, and the banner which he displays over his soldiers, are of love ; he hath love in his colours, in his countenance, and in his words ; what love compellations doth he give to his soldiers ? “ My friends, lambs, doves, my undefiled,” &c.—When a soldier was brought before Lamachus for a crime, the soldier promised never to offend again. Lamachus answered, “ None must offend twice in war.” But Jesus is full of compassion towards his soldiers ; he loves them too dear to hurt any of them ; he never strikes but it goes to his heart.

II. For encouragement, as you have a good captain, so you have a good cause too. It is true, some will engage in wars, whether right or wrong ; and, butcher like, will make a trade of killing, and pocket up the price of blood, though



though it be the blood of Christ and his people. But, soldiers of Christ, whatever others may have to say for the goodness of their cause, you may depend upon the goodness of your's; it is the most righteous cause that ever any mortal engaged in since the world began. This war is the lambs against the world, flesh, and the Devil. The apostle Paul was not ashamed to fight in and for this cause at Rome, before the valiant soldiers, the potent and politic statesmen, the learned philosophers, and the eloquent orators.—Hooper, the martyr, wrote thus to some of his friends in London, concerning the goodness and equity of this cause:—"Dear brethren, continually fight the Lord's battle; your cause is most just and good; you fight for Christ and true religion," &c.

III. For encouragement, you have good weapons. Paul says, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual and mighty," &c. 2 Cor. x. 4. No weapons of war are like those which Christ, the great king, gives to his soldiers; neither the strength of earth nor hell is able to prevail against them; a few of which briefly I shall mention unto you.

I. The shield. This will not only stop the cold darts of men, but the fiery darts of the Devil; his darts are the worst in the world; his power very strong to throw them: but neither Devils nor men have been able to force their darts through the believer's shield, Heb. xi. 34. The shield of faith will both cool and quench

quench the fiery darts of Satan, that they can neither burn nor singe the soldiers of Christ.

II. The sword. This is the sword which the omnipotent spirit has made, and it is the word of God, Heb. iv. 12. By this sword the captain of salvation conquered the Devil; by this too he does and will conquer the man of sin, the kings of the earth, and the kingdoms of the world. No sword in the world so cutting and penetrating as this is: we may say of this as David said of Goliath's, "There is none like it; give me this sword."

III. The helmet. In one place it is called the hope of salvation, in another the helmet of salvation. What was Goliath's great helmet of brass, which he put on, to this helmet of salvation, which the soldiers of Christ wear? Goliath lost his helmet, and head too, in his duel with David; but whole legions of Devils, and all the powers of darkness, cannot take away the lives, nor cut off the heads of those who wear the helmet of salvation.

IV. The breast-plate. It is called the breast-plate of righteousness, Ephes. vi. 14. Whether it be meant of the righteousness of justification without us, or of sanctification within us, or both, I will not determine; for both are made an armour for the believer. This breast-plate is an heart-securing and an heart-strengthening grace. Neither the law, sin, death, or devils, can hurt that soul who wears the imputed righteousness of Christ for a breast-plate. All the arrows, shots, darts, swords, and spears of the most cruel enemy will

will be recoiled before this armour. What enemy can wound the soul, or harm the heart, where the vital parts are so well guarded?

V. The belt. This strengthens the loins, fastens the breast-plate, on which also the sword is girded. This belt or girdle is truth, Ephes. vi. 14. Everlasting truth is of everlasting strength. Truth is a torch that all the winds of earth and hell can never blow out; a flame that all the floods of persecutions and afflictions can never quench. All the force and strength, both of men and devils, can never conquer truth; it is immortal and invincible, like God himself; it fears no faces; it seeks no corners: the devil could not conquer Job because of this.

VI. The defence of your feet. Having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, thou shalt tread the lion and the adder, the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under foot. There is a two-fold peace, whereby the gospel doth arm a believer's soul; peace with God, and peace with conscience.—This is feet armour which your captain hath prepared for you; blessed be God for it! Peace with God and with conscience is to the believing soul, like a ship that hath a bottom to bear it up from sinking, and hath a mast above water, bearing colours of joy and gladness. This will give not only rest, but joy in the storm; it will not only enable one to bear tribulation, but to glory in tribulation; it will support the soul under all vicissitudes, mutations, and transmutations, through  
the

the whole course of providence, from the beginning to the end. O how happy those are, yea, and safe too, whose feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace! Now, soldiers of Christ, you see what an armour your armour is! gird it on, and in your captain's strength and name make use of it too: Be valiant for the truth upon the earth, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners.

Lord, how secure and blest are they

Who feel the joys of pardon'd sin?

Should storms of wrath shake earth and sea,  
Their minds have heaven and peace  
within.

VII. The engine. The believer's engine of war is prayer; this engine consists of two things, viz. parts and properties.

I. Parts. Observe them all in one text, Ephes. vi. 18.

I. Praying always, i. e. to pray occasionally and habitually, constantly, in private and in public. One generation soweth prayer, and another reapeth the crop of mercy prayed for.

II. With all prayer, i. e. to pray with the understanding, conscience, will, and affections. All prayer is, to read the soul to and before God, and not the book. To bring a book full of prayers before God, avails but little; but to have the heart brought before him, under the influence of the spirit of prayer, and express our necessities unto him through Jesus Christ, is more acceptable than any thing we can bring,



bring, and more like unto all prayer than all the books in the world besides.—Will the hypocrite always pray? No, no; he is not for all prayer: all prayer is to pray with Solomon on the throne, with Job on the dunghill, with Abraham in Canaan, with Lot in Sodom, with Moses in the mount, and with Jonah in the great deep: this is all prayer.

III. Supplication. Praying always with all prayer and supplication is to pray like an Abraham pleading with God for a Sodom, like a Moses with his whole soul lifted up to God in prayer against divine wrath, like a Jeremiah floating in tears for the misery of Sion: this is all prayer and supplication.

IV. In the spirit. “Praying in the Holy Ghost,” says Jude; so here, praying in the spirit. This is the great spring of the believer’s engine. If one had all the prayer books in the world, saying, “Let us pray all day long,” if the spirit is wanting, all books and prayers, though composed by the best, are but like a corpse without a soul. As the body is motionless without the soul, so is prayer without the spirit. The Lord cares not for those who put on Aaron’s linen ephod and use not Moses’ living, praying engine. O what engine is like the believers? What were any of those which Archimedes made, or those which the pope and his prelates have made, when compared to the engine of prayer? This is all of the spirit; every thought, sigh, word, and groan, are of the spirit. The Christian is a soldier, armed, clothed, strengthened, principled, animated

mated, carried out, and carried on with and by the spirit.

V. Watching thereunto. All prayer hath all watching joined unto it.

I. This engine should be watched that it be kept clean ; or else, formality, hypocrisy, diffidence, and deadness, will (like rust) eat its strength, and stop its discharge.

II. That it be well placed, or fixed. This engine must be fixed by the hand of faith upon the high garrison of the impenetrable promises, else it will make no execution at all. Engineers are very careful how and where they place their engines of war ; so should the believer be also. No foundation is fit for a believer to place his engine upon, but an eternal Christ, and unchangeable promises.

III. This engine should be watched that it be discharged well for to make execution and destruction among the enemy. An engineer will not set his engine only, but will watch to see what exploits it will do likewise ; so the believer must observe how his prayers go off and what execution they make. We should watch to see how much sin is destroyed, how many temptations are repelled, how fast the devil is made to flee by the power and force of prayer. Prayer goes forth to God in Christ, and brings back with it many blessings into the soul. Happy those who are enabled through grace to deal with God in prayer.

VI. Another part of this engine is all perseverance. You see how it increaseth grace upon grace in an harmonious and inviolable

concordancy and concatenation. All perseverance, that is, perseverance in all the times, the seasons and occasions of prayer; with Isaac in the field, with David in the morning, with the spouse on her bed, with Peter and John in the temple, with Christ in the mountain, in the desert, in the garden, and on the cross: this is all perseverance in prayer. To persevere in prayer is to pray with Daniel three times a day when it is death to pray once a month; to begin, continue, and end one's life with prayer, Luke, xviii. 1. To keep winding and bending the spring of prayer until the mercy is obtained; to take hold of the angel with Jacob, though the angel of the everlasting covenant, saying, "Now I have hold of thee, I will not let thee go until thy blessing comes upon me, though all my bones were put out of joint." To persevere in prayer is to break through all the barricadoes which one may meet with in the way, as the Canaanitish woman did. How many obstacles she met with, and yet broke through them all!

I. Christ's silence. Though she cried aloud, not a word of answer came from him.

II. When he spoke, his words were very cutting, and enough to break her heart: "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Alas! this poor woman was none of them. What shall she do now? Why here she will not stop, but climbs over this obstacle by the scaling ladder of faith. As she was behind him before, now she runs and gets before him, puts on with more force, worshipping and  
praying

praying together, with her " Lord help me," yet had no relief!

III. Christ calls her a dog. Now one would think that these words had struck her dead : indeed struck down she was, and being so low, putting her praying engine on the ground of God's mercy in Christ towards a poor sinner, and like a spiritual engineer, finds now the way to strike the mark, when the standers by think it farthest off and most at random. " True, Lord, (says she) I am no better than a dog ; yet there is something belonging to a dog, O let me have that ! I am unworthy to sit at table to eat with thy children ; but I will wait as a dog under, to receive a crust or a crumb when it falls." Being thus humbled, she gets into the very heart of Christ, and there hits the mark and gains the mercy she prayed for, and goes home with trophies of victory over the devil. This is persevering in prayer. To persevere in prayer is to pray hard ; to turn every thing that seems to lie in the way of mercy ; to get over all discouragements ; yea, to form arguments for mercy out of discouragements and miseries. For thy name sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great ! David made the greatness of sin to be an argument for pardon.

What though our mighty guilt beyond

The wide creation swell,

And has its curs'd foundation laid

Low as the deeps of hell !

See here an endless ocean flows

Of never failing grace ;



Behold a dying Saviour's veins

The sacred flood increase.

VII. Supplication for all saints. This is the last part which I shall mention of this mighty engine of prayer. None while out of hell are to be excluded out of our prayers; neither are we to pray for those who have departed from this life, nor unto them upon any account whatever. Striving together in prayer. Unity is the strength of heaven; trinity in unity, and unity in trinity. Unity is the strength of hell also. If Satan's kingdom could be divided, it would come to nothing soon. Unity is the strength of the militant church likewise: to be one with Christ and with one another. What can be more strong? So when united together in prayer, what can withstand that prayer? To make supplication and prayer for all saints, is to pray for all the saints indefinitely and universally; for one as well as another; for a Lazarus lying at the door, as well as for a Solomon sitting on the throne. Supplication for all saints is to pray for all those who we hope do belong to God, though of different judgments from us. We should not divide in our prayers those whom Christ hath united unto himself by his spirit. We should not pray for one sect of people and persecute another, if belonging to God. All the creatures, though of different kinds and dispositions, lived peaceably together when shut up in the ark; so should all the people of God live, who are shut up in the ark Christ. To make supplication for all saints is to persevere

vere in all prayer for them, that they may persevere in prayer and in every duty ; that they may use all their armour aright, and fight manfully under Christ's banner ; that they may be found faithful unto death, and at last obtain the crown of everlasting life.

With humble love address his throne ;

For if he frown, ye die :

Those are secure, and those alone,

Who on his grace rely.

God grant that we may be found of this happy and secure number !

This leads me secondly to show the properties of this engine of prayer.

I. It is perfect, and an entire engine. It needs no additions, neither from prelates or popes. The common engine is very imperfect : many cases, conditions, and necessities, which it cannot reach ; for it hath been observed, when malefactors have been brought to the place of execution, having one foot on the ladder and the other stepping into eternity, how the ordinaries come thither with the common engine, and fumble about it, because of its imperfection. Now for want of a better prayer they make use of that for the visitation of the sick, in private, where they are like to hit the mark as soon as an engineer, who dischargeth his engine eastward in the morning, and thinks to strike the sun at his setting. It was well that the martyrs had a better engine to help them in Smithfield, than the malefactors have to help them at the gallows. Ah ! soldiers of Christ ! make use of this perfect engine of prayer,

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which

which lieth in your armoury. It is a sign of an evil heart to restrain, or to give off prayer. Mr. Caryl said, "There are five stairs which lead to hell, viz. Quenching of the spirit, grieving the spirit, resisting the spirit, vexing the spirit, doing despight unto the spirit." Mr. Jeremiah Dyke said, "Quenching of the spirit is the first step to utter apostacy and destruction."

II. It is a portable engine ; that is, it can be carried about from place to place. Noah could carry this with him into the ark, and use it upon the mighty waters too ; Abraham could carry it into a strange country, Isaac into the field ; Jacob could carry it with him on his journey, and though he was made to go halting with using it, yet, lame as he was, he could carry this engine of prayer along with him, and thereby made heaven to smile and hell to tremble many a time. This praying engine Moses could carry with him up to the top of the mount. All the Old Testament believers could carry this with them into the caves and the dens of the earth. Jeremiah took this with him into the miry dungeon ; Daniel into the lionsden, Jonah into the whale's belly. This praying engine the apostles took with them into prison, and the martyrs into the bishop's dark coal-house. What Bias, the philosopher, said of his learning and moral virtues may a believer say of this engine, "All mine I carry with me." Blessed be God for this engine of prayer ! O take it up believers, and make use of it ! for it will both please your captain and comfort

comfort your souls. The Romans weighty engines and massyrams required great strength to draw them about ; but this engine of prayer will fetch in strength enough to carry itself and the carrier too. The weakest believer in the whole world, through the help of the spirit, may with pleasure carry this engine along with him.

III. It is an hidden engine : it can be placed in secret, and be used in secret likewise. It hath many occult properties and qualities in its mysterious workings, that the enemy with the greatest inspection and policy cannot descry. When Herod stretched forth his hand openly, and raised a battery against the church, and digged deep to blow it up, Peter was cast into prison, and chained fast in prison also. The church got together in private, and made prayers without ceasing ; their prayer went secretly to heaven, and took a courtier of the throne by the hand, and brought him down to the prison : he unbolts the doors, looseth the chains, and brings forth Peter ; he goes to Herod the king, and smites him down to the ground with death. When Peter and John were apprehended and convened before the rulers and elders, they threatened them, and strictly charged them, to preach no more in Christ's name ; they took no notice of this, but returned to their company, reported what was done, and how matters went on, and also set their prayer engine a-going to counter-work the enemy's rage ; and though in prison, the place shook by the report of their engine, and away comes an angel by night, and opens the



the prison doors, brings them forth, and bids them go into the temple, and speak all the words of this life.—This engine sometimes is discharged forward, to pursue and overtake the fliers in their fearful flight ; and sometimes backwards, to break down the bridges, to open the sluices, to draw the hatches, to fill up the moats, and to stop the enemy in his most vehement pursuit.—This engine goes off sometimes through an absolute promise, sometimes through a conditional one ; but always through a mediator, and then it never misseth. “ I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye my face in vain.” O believers ! keep charging and discharging your engine, for it shall not be in vain. It is one of God’s glorious attributes that he heareth prayer. Oh, little doth the world know what is in the prayers of the saints ! what good or what hurt this engine will secretly do them ! It can kill and cure at once ; it can raise up the lowest saint, and sink to the bottom the highest sinner. It can discharge mercy and judgment, honey and gall at once—“ To him who smote great kings ; for his mercy endureth for ever : Sihon, king of the Amorites ; for his mercy endureth for ever : and Og, king of Bashan ; for his mercy endureth for ever.” This sheweth the different effects of prayer. It can shoot bladders to the one and mill-stones to the other. O the mystery of prayer ! This is one of the greatest mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, which the world understands nothing of ; yet babes and sucklings have it revealed unto them

them. Their hands are the hands which turn the cock above, that they may draw the sweet wine of the kingdom to cordial and refresh themselves therewith; and also that they may fill the cup to the brim with the bitter, the red, the sparkling wine of God's wrath, for all implacable and oppressing enemies. These babes have the key of the kingdom of heaven, where the treasures of mercy and wrath are laid up and reserved. Prayer hath much intimacy, and goes hand in hand with the invisible God. It can deliver an arrow to the heart of a Julian, and strike a nail through the head of a Sifera while sleeping in the tent. This can kindle fire and quench a flame at once. Ah! subtle plotters against God's people! fear this secret engine; for it will countermine all your plots, sink you down, or blow you up. O England, England! leave off unscriptural forms and popish relics, and make use of this engine of prayer. When all other engines fail, and all other means lose their use, this secret engine of prayer will dig a well and draw water together, open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. It is said of Archimedes, when the Romans laid siege to Syracuse, he made a kind of burning glasses, and set many of their ships on fire, being in the haven. He had variety of engines, some for one purpose some for another; because he could not make one engine to answer all purposes; but the engine of prayer is made to answer all intents and purposes whatever, that a believer stands in need of while

while in this world. O the mystery of prayer ! It carries divers and contrary effects at one and the same time ; it will carry the golden ball of mercy one way, and the grenado of wrath the other way ; it will dismount a Haman, and set a Mordecai on horseback ; it will advance the one to honour, and the other to the gallows. All this is through God ; for you must and should remember, that this engine of prayer cannot do any thing at all of itself ; it is God that gives it to move ; he causes it to work and to perform these different effects ; therefore let us worship God, and not prayer ; all honour and praise be unto his blessed name, that he is pleased to hear and to answer our prayers !

The rock of Israel ever lives ;

His name be ever blest :

'Tis his own arm the victory gives,

And gives his people rest.

IV. This engine of prayer makes a loud report. The word hath a voice, the rod hath a voice, & prayer hath a voice, yea, a loud voice too, tho' the carnal, careless, secure, and sleepy world hear it not. Eli could not hear the voice of Hannah, tho' standing by her on earth ; yet her voice was heard in heaven by her gracious God. Luther said, " The least sigh of a contrite heart so fills heaven with noise, that there is no noise of any thing in heaven or earth heard at that time but the noise of prayer." There are three things in the Scriptures which make a cry ; the sins of the wicked, the sufferings

ings and blood of God's people when oppressed and martyred. Prayer is said to have a cry too, Luke, xviii. 7. Prayer hath a loud and a long cry; it cries night and day, from generation to generation; it cries until the cause and quarrel of the elect be avenged, and the mercies prayed for be obtained. Though prayer may sound no more than a tear on earth, yet it sounds like a trumpet in heaven. God help us to pray! The prayers of God's people go up to heaven with the smoke of incense; but they make a report, and recoil with a loud echo, and voices like terrible thunders and earthquakes, Rev. viii. 3, 4, 5. The believer's God makes much, yea, makes most of the least of prayer. If his people do but sigh on earth in a dungeon, he hears on his throne in glory. O believers! what a God have you! that a sigh should awake him, and bring him down from the throne to the footstool, to help his sighing, praying, and crying people, Psalm lxxix. 11. Prayer is a weapon which your enemies with all their skill and power cannot take from you, nor wholly stop the use of it, as long as you live. Let a believer have all his books taken from him, yet he can pray; cast him to prison, he can pray; cast stones at him, yet he can pray: stop his mouth with a gag, then he can sigh; cut off his tongue, then he can groan, and that is prayer. The more men endeavour to silence prayer, the louder it will cry; let out its blood, it will cry with the blood of Abel; burn it to ashes, its dust will rise up to heaven, and join



join forces with the army of martyrs, and besiege the throne of God, of grace, and of glory, with a loud voice, "How long, holy and true, dost thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" O enemies to prayer and praying people! what do you mean? Can you stop the running of Jordan, or the roaring of the sea, or the terrible shout of the last trumpet when you are called to judgment thereby? Then you may stop the loud noise of this praying engine, and not till then.

From strength to strength go on,  
Wrestle, and fight, and pray,  
Tread all the powers of darkness down,  
And win the well fought day.

TO PLADY.

V. It is a powerful engine. It hath had power over devils, over men, and over the Almighty himself in a measure. This engine has raised the dead, healed the sick, chained up and cast out devils. When the gift of miracles could not do it, the gift of prayer did it. O the power of prayer! When Paul knew no other way to break his chains, he questioned not but this engine of prayer would do it—"But withal prepare me a lodging; for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you."—This engine hath shut up heaven and opened it again; hath stopt the sun and moon in their courses, untill the people had conquered their enemies. It is said of Luther, that he could have whatever he would of God in prayer. O what a powerful thing is prayer! It can bring down mercies and  
hovah

carry away miseries. O praying souls! you are the mighty ones; you have power as princes to prevail with God. Moses with this engine could tie up the omnipotent arms of Jehovah, that he could not destroy the children of Israel, *Exod. xxxii. 10, 11.* "By blood and prayer (said Luther) the church conquers and overcomes the whole world."

By prayer I counterplot my foes,  
Nor need their ambush fear,  
Because my life-guard also goes  
Behind me in the rear.

Blessed be God for his mercy and protection!

VI. It is a terrible engine. When this engine is charged with threats and imprecations, wo to them who are butts and marks placed before it! Read the 35th Psalm through, there you will find how terrible this engine is. It is said of the queen of Scots, that she was more afraid of Mr. Knox's prayers than the invasion of an English army. If one saint's prayers were so dreadful and terrible, how terrible the prayer of the whole militant church when united! When all the militant believers are compleatly marshalled into ranks and files, with armour on, with weapons drawn, with banners displaying, with their engine firing, then (says Christ) "Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners."

Having showed you thus the parts and properties of the engine of prayer, I shall conclude this head with a word or two of application.

I. Set this engine on work to kill all the vermin of lust and temptations; to root up and to carry off the luxurious broods and branches of sin and corruption; fire at the very heart of sin in your own hearts; do not give up till you find a general rout here. Again, make use of it to fetch in your soul provision; to get in more spiritual might and force from the spirit of Christ and from his word, that you may be quickened, strengthened, stablished, and comforted to go on in the ways of Christ.

II. Make use of this engine with valiant Joshua in your house and family; do not lie open to that wrath which is threatened to be poured upon the Heathens and families who call not on the name of the Lord.

III. Make use of this engine in the churches of Christ; pray for the whole cause of Christ in the world; pray for his whole church militant every where on earth. If you should be despitefully used and persecuted for praying, yet meet together and pray for all saints and for all men; for kings, and others under them in authority, that you may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

IV. Make use of this engine of prayer in reference to the kingdom. There is a two-fold evil that you should by prayer beg the Lord to remove out of the land, viz. the evil of sin and the evil of suffering.

I. The evil of sin. This is the evil of evils, the enemy of enemies. O what a large field the evil of sin is! a deep abyfs! a miry Sodom! legions of Devils! boundless and bottomless

tomless hell! the known and unknown land in our own country! The innumerable, God provoking, and land destroying sins of our days are very great. England is full of swearers, whoremongers, drunkards, sabbath-breakers, &c. Ah, soldiers of Christ! the sins of the land have made a sad work amongst us. These are the greatest sowers of sedition in court and country. These are the greatest enemies to the king and kingdom. Sin turned angels out of Heaven, Adam out of Paradise, and all the world into confusion and ruin. Never think of peace and settlement as long as the whoredoms and witchcrafts of Jezebel remain in the city and in the country. These are Devils which have possessed our land like the man in the gospel. These sins cast it sometimes into the fire and sometimes into the water; sometimes into the plague, into the sword, and into the famine. These are such a kind of sins as go not out but by prayer and fasting. Ah, soldiers of Christ! to your engine duty; pray, and pray hard; intreat the Lord by prayer that he would destroy the sins of our land before we are brought to destruction by them. Ah, engineers! be very busy about your engine contrivances. Though you may be looked upon as incendiaries, and be called the troublers of Israel for praying, yea, and may be killed in the place for praying too, yet it shall be said of you, as it was said of Josiah, that, "Though he was slain in war, yet he died in peace."



II. In reference to the evil of affliction. O there is need for the people of God to pray that the Lord would be pleased to remove the judgments and miseries which are in our land already. One great judgment lying upon us is an ignorant, sottish, debauched, superstitious ministry. O pray that more life, more light, and better oil may be put into many of our lamps, or rather dark lanterns, or else keep on praying till they are entirely extinguished. One said, that heretofore we had golden priests and wooden chalices; but now we have golden chalices and wooden priests. This is a great plague in England at this day, that the priest's house, in many places, should be more infectious than a pest-house; and that the white Devil should destroy more souls in the place of worship than the black Devil does in the market. Oh! as you love your native land, and your own and other's souls, set your praying engine at work, and desire the Lord to remove this heavy judgment from us.—Again, Let us be earnest in prayer with God, desiring him to put an end to wars and rumours of wars, both in church and state. Let us intreat the Lord in prayer that he would remove our poverty and distress, and that he would restore unto us health, strength, plenty, and peace, all the days of our lives. Ah, soldiers of Christ! use this engine, and pray as the Lord Jesus instructed his disciples, that the Lord of the harvest would send forth labourers into his harvest, Luke, x. 2. Pray that the gospel may have

have a free passage and run, and be of great use every where in our land ; that peace and purity in doctrine and discipline may meet together amongst us in all the churches of Christ; that God would raise up a bulwark, yea, a mighty battery against the bloody Romish religion ; and that his spirit may lift up a standard against these Assyrians whensoever they attempt to invade our land. O let us unanimously pray for the blessings of the gospel of peace, and that prosperity may attend it throughout the whole world ; and that it may never be taken, nor kept in uncircumcised Philistines hands ; but that we may leave it to the generations to come, that after we have served God in our own generation, that the generations to come may have a cause to stand up and call us blessed.—Many of us have but little or nothing of this world's goods to bequeath to our children, yet let us pray that we may leave unto them the unsearchable riches of Christ in the great truths and precious ordinances of the gospel.

Make use of your praying engine about foreign affairs, whether more near or more remote abroad in the world.

I. For the good of the neighbouring nations, where any of our Protestant brethren reside. There are many in these nations that are (as it were) bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. O let us pray that liberty and peace may be granted unto them !

II. Make use of your praying engine to batter down the strong holds of Popery every

where. O fix your engine against the walls of Babylon, and never give off till you hear a voice behind you, saying, " Babylon is fallen, is fallen !"

III. Make use of this great engine of prayer to bring down the great Turk, together with his cruel and hellish authority.

IV. Set this engine at work for the carrying forth of the gospel of the kingdom into all the kingdoms of the world, that the forces and fulness of the Gentile nations may come in ; and that his antient people, the Jews, may be brought into a saving knowledge of Christ ; and that the kingdoms of the world may come to be the kingdoms of our God, and of his Christ for ever and ever.

Good news from Heaven, where angels dwell,

To those that well deserved Hell ;

Of strength too weak for work and war,

And access near to those afar.

Thus I have described briefly the nature, qualities and use of your mighty praying engine ; but after all, you nor it can do nothing without God ; therefore, O soldiers of Christ ! look unto your eternal God and Father, and pray most earnestly that he would grant unto you his help, influence, and directions, till you arrive safe from all troubles and wars, to the land of endless peace and tranquility.

V. For your encouragement consider your standard. A standard is an ensign of war, and it is to distinguish between army and army, company and company. It is the general's

ral's colours, whether at land or sea, and it hath commonly the arms of the kingdom and country to which it belongs displayed in it too. This is to bring together, to encourage, and comfort the soldiers who belong to it, and to dismay, discourage, discomfit, and terrify the enemy; it is a sign of dignity to the soldiers that are under and for it, and for dread and destruction to those that are against it. What are the stately standards of the world to this of Christ? What is the great Turk's, with his half moon; or the German emperor's, with his brazen spread-eagle; or the king of Spain's, with his strong castle; or the French king's fleur-de-lis; or the king's arms of the three kingdoms, supported and guarded with a lion and an unicorn, to this great standard of Christ? The glorious gospel which brings life and immortality to light, is the standard, the ensign, and banner of your great commander. This bears the names, the attributes, the titles, and the eternal truths of the blessed Trinity. It bears both the offices and the ordinances of the holy Jesus, and conspicuously displays them to the world, Isaiah, lxii. 10, 11, 12. Isaiah, xlix. 22. This gospel standard is a flag of truce, and it is full of encouragement to all that will come under it; to these it is a standard of grace, love, and peace; but to all that oppose, it is a bloody flag, and a terrible banner of wrath and death. It will conquer and crush all persons and powers that continue to oppose it.—Julius the Third had stamped on his coin, "That nation and kingdom shall  
 perish



perish which doth not serve me."—The Lord Jesus summons in the nations and kingdoms of the world by the standard of the everlasting gospel : wo, wo, unto all those who obey it not ! Rev. xiv. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. The gospel standard is an ensign that hath been shot at and designed against by the enemy ; but it stands up in the world and is displayed to this day, and shall continue until it shall make all the mighty ones of the world to strike sail, and vail bonnet unto it ; for the motto of Christ is, " King of Kings, and Lord of Lords." The Lord Jesus will cut down with the sharp sword that goeth out of his mouth all that will not come under his standard ; he must and shall reign until all his enemies are made to be his footstool.—Sentensis says, that " When Crosted, bishop of Lincoln, died, there was a voice heard in the Pope's court, saying, " Come thou wretch to be judged of God." A voice like this shall soon ring over the whole world, saying, " The judgment of the man of sin, of the whore of Babylon, of the beast, and of the kings of the earth, who have given up their power unto him, is come." But was this the case this very moment, the believer could sing thus :

The judgment day I dread the less ;  
My judge is made my righteousness.

In the gospel standard we have most conspicuously displayed unto us the face, the love, the heart, the bowels, and the blood of Christ, reaking and streaming unto us unworthy sinners.

O for

O for this love ! let rocks and hills  
 Their lasting silence break,  
 And all harmonious human tongues  
 The Saviour's praises speak.

In this gospel standard you may see your Magna Charta, and also the golden chain of your salvation, which links you fast to glory. In this you may read the Father electing, the Son redeeming, and the Holy Spirit sanctifying and preparing you for eternal rest. There is nothing in the gospel of Jesus but love and life, sweetness and peace. God be praised for the gospel ! O where can you match this matchless standard ?—It is said of Alexander, that when he came to besiege any place or garrison, he was wont to hang up a lighted lamp to be a sign of mercy ; that if the enemy would submit whilst that was burning, there was quarter to be given ; but after that was out, there was nothing left but the bloody standard, nothing remained but immediate death. Thus the Lord Jesus does by the gospel. He hangs forth the golden lamp of life and light, and declares safety and peace to all that come unto him by the gospel call and according to the gospel directions ; but to those who make light of his call, he will turn the bloody side of the standard towards them, and will show their doom and death without mercy, with an “ How shall ye escape for neglecting so great a salvation ? ” and with a “ Bring forth these mine enemies that would not have me to reign over them, and slay them before me.”

VI. Consider

VI. Consider your fortifications. All these are impregnable and impenetrable, are of eternal and invincible strength. Walls of brass are strong, yet behold stronger walls than of brass, Isaiah, xxvi. 1. How safe must those be, who are walled about with walls of salvation. As the cause is greater and better than the effect, so is the Lord more strong than salvation itself, Psalm xviii. 2. Psalm xlviii. 12, 13. Ah soldiers of Christ! how strong must those fortifications be that have many towers to defend them round about? Now go round about the militant church, and behold your fortifications, you shall find them to be of invincible strength, and so firm that it is impossible for all the powers of earth and hell to harm any of those that are found therein. All the glorious persons in the Trinity, all the names, titles, and attributes of the blessed Godhead, whether communicable or incommunicable, nominal or real, absolute or relative, and there are near five hundred of these to be found in the Scripture, and you may call every one of these a tower of defence for the militant church and the saints of God, while here upon earth and in the field of battle. At one tower truth defends, at another omnipotency guards, at another wisdom counterworks all the plots and mines of the enemy, at another justice clears off the enemy, at another wrath breaks upon them like fire from above. How terrible are the attributes and the threatenings of the great God to all his malicious enemies? How

How safe and secure must his own dear people be when surrounded with his own eternal power? Isaiah, xxxiii. 16. This Scripture contains every thing that a believer wants, and answers all objections that can be made against the security and safety of those who fear the Lord in the worst of times; for the place of their defence is so safe and so high as any thing in the eternal Jehovah.

More happy, but not more secure,  
The glorified spirits above.

O what a favour it is to have the great name of God! yea, the omnipotent power of Jehovah, to aid, preserve, and to deliver his people from all danger and distress! Prov. xviii. 10. Ah, soldiers of Christ! what encouragement is here to hold out the siege, when your defence is so strong and your provision so safe? Go on in the name of the Lord from conquering unto conquer.

A feeble saint shall win the day,  
Tho' Death and Hell obstruct his way.

VII. Consider though your number is but few, yet your side is the strongest. The eternal Trinity is on your side. "The Lord fights for you," said Moses, Exod. xiv. 14. How strong those must be that have a God to fight for them.—I have read of Antigoner, that when he was told of the supernumerous army that was coming against him, and that he was under number to engage the enemy; "How many (said he) do you reckon me to be." If Antigoner would be reckoned for many, how many may Jesus Christ be reckoned



to be ? What though the militant church is but few in number, one of a city and two of a tribe, and there should be never so many legions of Devils and armies of wicked men arising against it ? yet you may reckon Jesus Christ against all these, if they were a thousand times more in number than they are, Isaiah, xli. 14. " Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel ; I will help thee " " Though thou art as weak as a worm, yet I have the strength of a God ; and who can stand against a God and a worm when their strength is united ? " Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." You have the power of God's might on your side ; and if your general sees that you want help, he can raise the forces of Heaven to aid and assist you : then how strong must you be ? Ah believers ! your side is the strongest side. Blessed be God for his mercy ! O praise ye his holy name !

VIII. Consider though your service is hard and sharp, yet it is but short, Rev. ii. x. The ten days will soon be over ; and if days should seem long, the time of our tribulation and of enduring hardship is shortened to an hour, Rev. iii. 10. yea, it is shortened to a moment, 2 Cor. iv. 17. One of the martyrs said, " It is but to shut our eyes, and before we open them again we shall be found with God. " I have but a file or two (said Dr. Taylor, the martyr) to go over before I shall be at my Father's house." Luther hath three diminutives to set forth the shortness of the Christian's afflictions. " They are (says he) but for a little,

Te, little, little while : it is but a short blast, and it will soon be over." May God increase our faith to believe it ! and consider though your enemies seem to you to be too strong and many, yet they are all conquered by your captain already.

I. The Devils. Those potent, cruel, and malicious enemies are conquered and spoiled, Col. ii. 15.

II. Afflictions and persecutions. The apostle gives a challenge to them all, and insults over them in a triumphant manner, as being already conquered by the Lord Jesus, Rom. Ch. viii. 35, 36, 37, &c.

III. Death and the grave are conquered too. O Death ! thou wast once a formidable, stinging, and a killing enemy ; but the Lord Jesus Christ has been in the grave, has entered thy strong hold, has took out thy sting, took off thy arms, and spoiled thy power. O grave ! thou shalt be but a resting place for all them that die in the Lord ; for we have the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55.

IV. Ah, soldiers of Christ ! what an encouragement is here to endure hardness, that your potent enemies are all conquered by your captain ? He has won the day ; he has conquered every enemy, and went through the lonesome grave, and stands now on the other side, and bids you to be courageous ; therefore go on from conquering unto conquer till you arrive to Sion's hill.

IX. Consider

IX. Consider though your service may seem hard, yet it shall not hurt you, that is, it shall not finally ruin you nor your comfort. One said, " We may be killed, but we cannot be hurted." And if a Heathen could speak thus, much more cause has the believer to say so. The Lord Jesus assures his soldiers, that not an hair of their head shall perish. He will secure their meanest and lowest concerns, and will bring them all safe to their eternal home, notwithstanding all the gusts and blasts of providence, the persecutions and afflictions of the present world. Though you may be killed all the day long, yet you shall not be hurted.

X. Consider that all the hard service which you endure under Christ's banner is a new covenant privilege, Phil. i. 28, 29. and be nothing terrified by your adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God ; for to you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. The Lord carries on the happiness of believers, and causes all the cross winds of providence to work together for their good, Rom. viii. 28. Every billow of affliction and persecution is a means to bring the believer nearer and nearer to his God. Neither men, devils, nor death can so afflict you, but the Lord will make it to be for your good, being his people. One said of death, though it was an outlet to all misery and evil, to the believer it is an inlet to all happiness and eternal bliss. Blessed be God for this !

XII. Consider

XI. Consider for your encouragement your service under Christ is an honourable service. Paul did glory in his sufferings, as having much honour in them, Gal. vi. 14. and 17. There is more honour in the cross of Christ than in all the crowns in the world. When Marcellus was asked how he durst give battle to Hannibal, he answered, " I am a Roman born, and a soldier ; and by giving him battle, I shall make my renown everlasting." The soldiers of Christ will get an everlasting renown by being faithful in his service, Rev. ii. 13. They do not merit this by their faithfulness ; but Christ favours them therewith. Oh ! the honour there is in enduring hardness in the service of Christ ! It is an honour that the angels never bore ; they are ministering spirits to serve God in a way of active obedience ; but never in a way of passive obedience, as the believer is.—Romanus, a nobleman by birth, gloried more in his persecution and martyrdom than in the nobleness of his blood. " Spare me not for my nobility, (said he) for not the blood of my progenitors, but the Christian profession makes me noble.

XII. Consider though your service may be hard, your pay by and by shall be very good and very sweet. The Lord Jesus will pay off all his soldiers with crown pay, not of gold, but of glory, 1 Pet. v. 4. Rev. ii. 10. Where is any commander that pays off his soldiers like Jesus Christ ? You shall have the same crown, kingdom, throne, and glory, that he hath himself, Rev. iii. 21.



XIII. Consider though your service be never so hard in itself, yet your gracious captain can make it very easy. It is his yoke, and his burthen ; he will help to draw in the yoke, and will help to bear the burthen, until all is done, and the labour finished, Matt. xi. 28. Ah, believers ! the strengthenings, supportings, quickenings, the heart-chearings and soul-revivings of Jesus Christ, can make your hardest service very sweet and easy unto you. Paul said he could do all things through Christ's strength, Phil. iv. 13. Other commanders can put their soldiers on hard service, but they cannot make it easy unto them as Christ can. The blessed Jesus can so principle and influence the souls of his soldiers with love, that their hardest service is no more unto them than ease, pleasure, and delight. When Elizabeth Young was put in prison, upon the account of religion, the gaoler was commanded to give her hardly any thing for her support. She said, " If you take away my meat, I trust God will take away my hunger." Ah, Sirs ! the Lord has many ways to sweeten and facilitate all the troubles and afflictions of his dear people.

XIV. Consider those that have endured most hardness in Christ's service have commended it after all. Paul called his fight a good fight : notwithstanding all the stripes, persecutions, nakedness, poverty, and all the imprisonments which he suffered in the cause of Christ, he called it a good fight, ii. Tim. iv. 7. Polycarpus, who had served under Christ's

Christ's banner eighty-six years, said, " I have always found him a good master." John Mullet, a soldier of the emperor of Germany, said, " We have often hazarded our lives for the emperor, and shall we now shrink to die for the King of Kings ?

Jesus can make a dying bed

Feel soft as downy pillars are,

While on his breast I lean my head,

And breathe my life out sweetly there.

XV. Consider that notwithstanding all the hardships you endure, and all the dangers you have to go through, yet you are immortal until your time is come and your work is finished. They could not take away the life of Christ until his time came. O the many dangers that Paul was in ! and yet he finished his course, his ministry, and his work. History informs us how St. John was banished into the isle of Patmos, yet for all this he lived till he was very old, finished his work, and died a natural death after all. So we read that the witnesses could not be slain until they had finished their testimony.

XVI. Consider that it is the way to conquer by enduring hardness. The captain of our salvation conquered every enemy by enduring. And this is the very way which he has left to most of his soldiers to get the victory, by keeping up the combat, and by enduring hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Believers have no way to overcome but by bearing his cross. It is said in Rev. xii. 11. " And they overcame by the blood of

the lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and loved not their lives unto the death." The lamb overcame by his own blood, and all the saints overcome by his blood. How notably Cyprian sets forth this truth in the following words ! " The tormented stood stronger than the tormentors ; the beaten and butchered members overcame the hands that did beat and butcher them ; cruel stripes, oft repeated, long continued, could not overcome their impregnable faith ; their bowels were digged out ; their blood gushed out, which quenched the burning of persecution, yea, extinguished the flames of Hell with a glorious stream." Fabrianus said, " First the battle, then the victory, when I am dead."

XVII. Consider for your encouragement that it is better to endure hardness for Christ than for sin ; better to suffer as a martyr for well doing than as a malefactor for evil doing. 1 Pet. iv. 16, 17. There is a cause of shame and sorrow in suffering for sin ; but there is a cause of comfort and rejoicing in suffering for Christ. They that read the lamentable story of Francis Spira, will easily conclude that it is better to endure hardness for Christ than for sin. One Denton, in queen Mary's time, said, " I cannot burn ;" but in some few days after, his house being on fire, he was burnt in it. And is it not better to burn at a stake for Christ than to burn in our houses for our sins ?

Bury'd in sorrow and sin,

At Hell's dark door we lay ;

But

But we [believers] arise by grace divine  
To see a Heavenly day.

Blessed be God for a resurrection from sin !

XVIII. Consider that persecuted godliness is better than prosperous wickedness, and that the worst of sufferings are better than the best of sins, if we can think one sin better than another. Moses preferred the reproaches of Christ, and sufferings for Christ, before all the pleasures and splendor of Pharaoh's court, Heb. xi. 25, 26. The more any people suffer for Christ from a principle of love, the more of his presence in general they enjoy ; and " One day's communion with Jesus Christ, (says Galiacius) is better than all the world." Ignatius, from a feeling sense of the enjoyment of Christ's presence, spake thus : " Let the fire, the cross, skirmishing with wild beasts, cuttings, butcherings, or renting in pieces, breaking my bones asunder, mangling my members, bruising my whole body, yea, let me suffer all the torments that men and Devils can invent, so that I may enjoy the Lord Jesus Christ. The kingdoms of the world cannot help me ; it is better for me to die for Christ than to reign over the whole earth."

XIX. Consider that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Here is much tribulation to be endured, but here is courage enough to endure it ; for it is the way, yea, the very way to the kingdom of heaven. Cranmer said, " What way to Heaven is so sure a way as to suffer in Christ's cause ?



cause? If there is any way to Heaven as on horse-back surely this is the way." Ah, soldiers of Christ! what encouragement is here to endure hardness, seeing you are in the way to the kingdom, and to all the immunities, honours, and pleasures of it?

The last thing I shall mention for your encouragement is this, viz. All your wounds, scars, broken bones, and your dislocated joints and members ere long will be perfectly healed, and made sound. John the Baptist's head shall be set on his shoulders again; the tongues which the persecutors cut off shall be put in the mouths of the saints again, to sing hallelujah and praise for ever; the bodies of the saints, which have been lacerated and burnt to ashes, shall at last be raised in the greatest perfection, splendour, and glory, Phil. iii. 21.

When this happy hour comes, then all the soldiers of Christ being gathered together from the field of battle shall surround the eternal throne, and being crowned with glory, having palms of eternal victory in their hands, will most sweetly sing unto the honour and praise of their immortal king.

Our souls did tread the desert through,

With undiverted feet,

And faith and flaming zeal subdu'd

The terrors which we meet.

Long nights and darkness dwelt below,

With scarce a twinkling ray;

But the bright world in which we are

Is everlasting day.

✓ Eternal

Eternal glory to the king

That brought us safely through ;

Our tongues shall never cease to sing,

And endless praise renew.

Oh reader ! God grant that it may be thy language in that day when all God's dear people shall live and rest in the enjoyment of his love for ever and ever !

II. For directions.

I. Live in views of the hardness which Christ Jesus endured for you ; think often upon the poverty and reproaches which he patiently bore on your account ; look upon him as in that hot and bloody conflict in the garden, when he sweat not only water, but blood ; and when he cried, " My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? " Look upon him treading the wine-press of his father's wrath ; and lying under the curse of the law. O believers ! he did all this, and more too, for you. The Lord Jesus hath endured far harder service for you than ever he called any of his soldiers unto to endure for him. O let us often think of this in our minds.—When John Huss, the martyr, had the skin flead off his head, and the persecutors had put on him a paper crown of a cubit high, painted with the picture of three ugly Devils, he said, " My Lord Jesus Christ for my sake did wear a crown of thorns ; why should I not wear this light paper crown for his sake, be it never so ignominious ? Truly I will do it, and that willingly."

II. Look at the cloud of witnesses, Heb. xii. 1. See how they have led the van, and endured

endured much hardness in the warfare of the Lamb.—The apostle expounds the cloud of witnesses, of Old Testament believers, mentioned in chap. xi. as a motive and means to stir up the New Testament believers to follow after them. O Sirs! let us look at these, and follow after them. They endured the hardness of bonds, of banishments, of the whip, the saw, the rack, the wheel, the gibbet, the fire, and all the tortures and cruelty that the malice of men and Devils could put upon them.—Herwin, the martyr, said to his brethren, when at the stake, “ I fight under the standard and in the cause of my great Lord and Captain, Christ. Do you follow me, if ever God should call you to it.”—Francis Glover said to his two sons who suffered together with himself, “ Sheep we are for the slaughter. This is no new thing. Let us follow millions of martyrs through temporal death unto eternal life. Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering, affliction, and patience.”

III. Consider seriously the hardness and misery which the damned endure and suffer, for denying and disowning the cause and service of Christ. What prison so dark, so dismal, so strong, so durable, as the infernal prison where the damned lie? What wrath like the wrath of God? What torment is like the torment of conscience? What fire of persecution and affliction is like the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone for ever? If  
we

we could think more upon these things in this light, we would not murmur so much as we do in enduring hardness in and for the cause of Christ.

IV. Think much upon your invisible God, and of the invisible things of the other world. Get up by faith to the top of Pisgah, and view the Holy Land. This was of great use to Moses, and it bore up his spirit above the fear of what Pharaoh could do when enraged against him. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, &c. Heb. xi. 27. Faith has an eye which penetrates to the things of the other world, and fetches comfort from hence into the believing soul. This was the method of the apostles and the primitive Christians: they looked at the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and whilst they took this prospect, it kept them from fainting and sinking, 2 Cor. iv. 16, 17, 18. Jesus Christ made use of this method himself, Heb. xii. 2.—A prospect of divine things made Tankerfield to speak thus at the stake: “Although I have a sharp dinner, I hope to have a joyful supper with Jesus in Heaven.”

V. Let your hearts hang loose from all the things of this world. The less your hearts are set on terrene things, the better will you take up and bear the cross of Christ.—“No man (saith the apostle) that warreth entangles himself with the affairs of this world, (or of this life) that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.”—If ever you would please your Captain Christ, pray unto him that he would keep your hearts from being entangled



tangled with the things of this world ; for the church which bore the brunt of persecution in the warfare of the lamb against the old serpent, &c. is described as one having the moon under her feet, *i. e.* she had the variable moon-like things of this world in contempt.—When Paul had the world crucified unto him, and himself unto the world, then he could not only bear the cross, but also glory in the cross of Christ.—When Juletta was condemned to lose her land and life for refusing to worship the Heathen Gods, she said, “ Farewell riches and welcome poverty ! Farewell life and welcome death ! All that I have, and if it were a thousand times more, would I rather lose than speak one blasphemous word against God, my Creator. I give thee most hearty thanks, O my God, for this grace, that I can despise this transitory world.”

VI. Desire your gracious God to warm your heart with his eternal love. A soul inflamed with the love of Christ, what will it not do or suffer for him ? Love is an arm invincible, and a flame that cannot be quenched. Jacob’s love to Rachel made the servitude of a double apprenticeship to seem but a few days ; so love to Christ will make the hardest service to appear as a pleasure, and the longest affliction to seem but short. Love is such a divine principle that it will make the soul to look over all the difficulties, dangers, and hardships that it meets with in the ways of Christ ; yea, it will make the greatest hardships to seem desirable and delectable in the believer’s view.—Mr. Bland,

Bland, the martyr, when at the stake said,  
 " This death is more desirable and dear unto  
 me than thousands of silver and gold. Such  
 love, O Lord, hast thou kindled in my breast,  
 that I hunger after thee."

VII. Consult not with carnal reason: if  
 you listen to this, it will lead you out of the  
 way, and cause you to wave the cross, and  
 to comply with sin rather than to suffer, and  
 endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus  
 Christ.—When Paul was called to endure  
 hardness in the service of Christ, he said im-  
 mediately, " I conferred not with flesh and  
 blood."—We should shun carnal reason and  
 fleshly wisdom as we would the Devil; for this  
 will teach men to sleep in a whole skin, to  
 swim with the stream, to correspond with the  
 times, yea, to sin rather than to suffer. May  
 the Lord deliver us from carnal reasoning! for  
 it is a great enemy to the cross of Christ.—  
 When a friend of Mr. Frith had contrived a  
 way to free him from prison, he smiled at it,  
 and said, " I am put here only for religion's  
 sake, and for such doctrine as I am bound in  
 conscience, under pain of damnation, to main-  
 tain. If I should now run away, I should run  
 from my God and from the testimony of his  
 word, whereby I should deserve a thousand  
 Hells."—Ah Sirs! take heed of this if ever  
 you would endure hardness as good soldiers of  
 your divine Jesus.

VIII. In the strength of the Lord and his  
 grace, resolve to endure what hardness soever  
 you may meet with in the service of Christ.

Cyrus said to one of his soldiers, "It is the part of a valiant man either to live honourably or to die honourably." So it is the part of every valiant Christian to do the same in the service of Christ.—Pyrrhus, seeing the fortitude and valour of the Romans, said, "If valour were lost, the mould of it might be found in a Roman's heart."—Where should true spiritual valour be found but in the heart of a sound believer?—When Wingfield was dissuading and discouraging Kerby, the martyr, from suffering, telling him, "The fire is hot, the terror great, the pain extreme, life sweet; better it were betime to stick to mercy, while there was hope of mercy, than rashly to begin, and afterwards to shrink;" Kerby said, "Ah, Mr. Wingfield! be at my burning, and you shall say, There standeth a Christian soldier in the fire; for I know that fire, water, sword, and all other things, are in the hands of God, and he will not suffer any more to be laid upon me than I am able to bear."—"Ah, soldiers of Christ! put on resolution and courage, and like the captain of your salvation, endure the cross and despise the shame; and as you proceed sing thus:

Gird thy loins up, Christian soldier,

Lo! thy captain calls thee out;

Let the danger make thee bolder;

War in weakness, dare in doubt.

Buckle on thy heavenly armour;

Patch up no inglorious peace;

Let thy courage wax the warmer,

As thy foes and fears increase.

Yea,

Yea, when dangers cloſer threaten,  
 And thy ſoul draws near to death ;  
 When aſſaulted fore by Satan,  
 Then object the ſhield of faith.  
 Fiery darts of fierce temptations,  
 Intercepted by thy God,  
 There ſhall loſe their force in patience,  
 Sheath'd in love and quench'd in blood.  
 God grant that this may be thy caſe, O reader !

IX. Look more at and upon your ſins than your ſufferings. The ſoul that lives moſt in the beholding of ſins, will ſee but little cauſe to murmur at the trouble and ſorrow through which it goes, while in the preſent life. The church ſuffered very hard when God made breach upon breach upon her: the ſword abroad, death at home, &c. How did ſhe act then ? Why ſhe looked more upon her ſins than upon her ſufferings ; ſaying, “ Wherefore doth a living man complain ; a man for the puniſhment of his ſins,” Lam. iii. 39.—If a man look upon his ſins to have deſerved the moſt heavy judgments, chains, plagues, wrath, blackneſs of darkneſs for ever, &c. how can he then think much to endure any hardneſs in the ſervice of Chriſt, ſeeing that he is ſaved through his righteouſneſs and blood ? God grant us a clear view of the exceeding ſinfulneſs of ſin.

X. Look on your mercies more than on your troubles, and you ſhall find this of great uſe to help you to endure hardneſs under Chriſt's banner. This was one reaſon why the Iſraelites could endure the hardneſs of the



wilderness no better, because they looked so much upon their wants and straits, and so little upon the miracles of mercies which so often were conferred upon them. Had they considered their wilderness mercy more, they would have endured their wilderness hardships with greater courage than they did. Had they considered what mercies they had in their bread, drink, and in their clothes; their meat and drink were not ordinary, but spiritual and miraculous, 1 Cor. x. iii. 4. Had their souls been affected with a sense of their mercies, how easily they might have endured the troubles and afflictions of the wilderness. It was a dolorous time when Jeremiah breathed forth those sad lamentations, where he complains of the famine, sword, the wormwood and gall, &c. and whilst he looked at these things his eyes affected his heart; but he did not determinate his thoughts on the dark side of their condition, but takes a prospect of their mercies which they had in their greatest miseries for their support. "It is (said he) of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed." O believers! it is impossible for you to be so low in affliction and trouble; but there is something of mercy left for the comfort and relief of your precious souls.—When tidings were brought to Lady Laglee that she was condemned to be hanged, she fell down upon her knees, and blessed God, &c. that he was pleased to call her to suffer for his truth, and to wear his livery, meaning the halter.—O bless God for your mercies, believers!

The

The Lord help us to learn this divine art, viz. to extract mercies out of miseries, then we shall be able to unfold Sampson's riddle, and to get bread out of the eater's mouth, and sweetness out of the strong; to sweeten the most bitter troubles which you meet with in your way to heaven.

XI. Compare your present crosses and troubles with your future glory and unfading crown. This has been a special mean by which suffering saints have been much animated to endure hardness, Rom. viii. 18.—The apostle Paul speaks very diminutively of present sufferings and afflictions when compared with future glory. Afflictions are but light; glory is ponderous and weighty. Afflictions are to be endured but for a moment; glory is to be endured for ever and ever.

XII. When you contemplate upon your immortal state and future glory, pray unto your eternal God that he would keep you in an humble frame of mind; for the lower you are made in your own eyes the better you will be accomplished to endure hardness in the service of Christ.—Job who was content to sit on the dunghill, and to abhor himself in dust and ashes; O how well was he accomplished to endure hardness?—David looked upon himself to be a worm, and no man. When one is brought to look upon himself to be a worm, and no man, he will not think it much when the feet of men or beasts trample upon him. May the Lord humble us, and may we be kept humble, always depending upon his almighty

power, and his eternal mercy towards us in Christ Jesus our Lord!—Paul looked upon himself with a very diminutive eye, as unworthy the name of an apostle, and to be less than the least of all saints; and when thus humbled, how mighty was he then in enduring hardness?—When the soldiers of Christ lie low in the valley of Humility, the shots of the enemy pass over them and hurt them not. Ah, believers! look upon yourselves as less than the least of all God's mercies, and as deserving the greatest afflictions and miseries, then you will endure hardness as good soldiers, and will not kick and fling when troubles and afflictions pinch you.

XIII. Desire your gracious God both to teach and help you to resign yourselves to his sovereign will and pleasure, yea, that he would give you to be any thing or nothing, in order that he himself may be all in all.—When Samuel brought Eli that sad message of what the Lord would do unto his house, at which the ears of every one that heard it should tingle, “It is the Lord, (said he) let him do what seemeth him good.” He had resigned himself to the will of God, therefore could better bear that heavy stroke.—The three children had resigned up themselves to the will of God, and were at a point with the king, notwithstanding all his rage and threats. Whether their God would deliver them or not, it was all one, the will of the Lord was to be done in the matter; then they could willingly and readily embrace the fiery furnace

nace rather than' worship the idol.—O, how easy might we bear the cross of Christ, and drink of the cup with Christ, if we had a resigning spirit like him! saying, “ Nevertheless not my will, but thy will be done.”—The everlasting covenant is ordered in all things well and sure. You cannot order things in providence nor grace so sure and so well as the Lord has done for you, therefore be resigned unto his sovereign will, and let him do with you, for you, and in you what seemeth him good, and you shall find this a good mean to help you to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

XIV. Take heed of those teachers and of those doctrines which lead you off from Christ and his cross. The doctrine of the gospel is called the preaching of the cross, 1 Cor. i. 16. There were teachers in the primitive times that carried on a design against the cross of Christ: here are, to our grief too, too many still in the world of this make: God help you to avoid them! and may you be preserved from being seduced by any of them to leave the good old way, which leads you to eternal glory.

XV. Desire the Lord to reveal unto your souls more and more of your covenant interest in Christ Jesus. The more you know the Lord to be your's, the better you will be enabled to endure hardness in the service of Christ. This was the best anchor-hold the prophet Jeremiah had to hold fast by, when those grievous storms of afflictions fell upon the church, Lam. iii. 24. “ The Lord is my  
portion



portion, (saith my soul) therefore will I hope in him." Together with this, pray earnestly that the presence of Christ may be with you in all your troubles and hardships as you pass through the present life; for in this life, and while here below, we are but pilgrims and strangers, passing forward through the wilderness, seeking a city whose builder and maker is God.— A stranger will not think it much if dogs bark at him as he passeth along; he knows it is usual. A traveller will not think it much if he meets with up-hills as well as down-hills; if he meet with storms, showers, and blasts, as well as calm weather and sun-shine; if he meets with inconveniencies at an inn he will not be much troubled at this, when considering that he is on his journey and not at home.— Can soldiers and combatants that have entered on a warfare expect to live quiet and at rest while the enemy is in the field and up in arms? O, no! no more can the believer; but that he may go through all weather, changes, dangers, hardships, and wars, with some degree of pleasure and delight. The assistance and presence of the Lord Jesus are the only means which are and will be of great use to the believers to help him to hold on and to hold out under all the hardness that he does, or has, or may endure, in his way to glory. The presence of the ever-blessed Trinity will sweeten every bitter trouble that you may meet with, and when you shall be called to the last combat, viz. death, nothing can make you happy here but his divine presence; for this was the support

port of David, and has been, is, and shall be, to the end of time, to those whom God loves, Psalm, xxiii. 4. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will not fear." What! not fear Death? No. Why? "For thou art with me."—O blessed be God for his comfortable and supporting presence! this is a sweet cordial indeed! "For thou art with me;" thou hast been with me through life; thou art now with me in death; and after this combat I shall be with thee through all eternity.

Then, dearest Lord, in thine embrace  
Let me resign my fleeting breath,  
And, with a smile upon my face,  
Pass the important hour of death.

Now, to conclude, study the many obligations that lie upon you to endure hardness in the service of Christ, as from the precepts, the promises, the ordinances, &c. yea, as from the love, the blood, and from the spirit of Christ, &c. But farther, you have obliged yourselves unto him; you have promised and covenanted to endure hardness, therefore as good soldiers, in the strength of the Lord, go on from conquering unto conquer, remembering that the vows of God are upon you, and whenever Christ calls you forth to suffer in his cause, be ready to answer these great obligations, saying with David, Psalm cxvi. 18, "I will pay my vows unto thee, O Lord."

F I N I S.

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6 JY 59

